539 /169 cont./
614 an Indian. He ate tuuma and wore a Guajiro robe. His mother
793 was an old woman. There she had her home. The father was one Saramai who, it is also said, was a god. As Mareiwa was born under an olive tree, the tree never loses its green leaves during any summer. And when there is a storm the Indians take shelter beneath its branches because lightning cannot penetrate there.

"Mareiwa ordered that there should be an Indian girl whom they called Borunka who was the mother of all the Guajiro Indians. Mareiwa gave her a husband by whom she became pregnant, but when the time of her delivery arrived she was not able to give birth. She had already suffered three days of labor pains without birth taking place. The cause was that her genital organ had teeth. Mareiwa extracted them, and later he took from the husband two ribs, the lower ones from each side of his body, to place in Borunka so that she could give birth to children without difficulty, though not without pain.

"Since there is always some loss of blood when there is a childbirth, Mareiwa called together all the little birds: the one called Sangre de Toro /Bull's Blood/ or pincwait he ordered to go and bathe at the spot where the birth had taken place. Also /he called/ the troupial, the icó with black wings and a red breast and crest, and the macaws. The woodpecker arrived late at the bath. Mareiwa said to him: 'You came late but I will anoint your crest,' and he painted it. For this reason, all these birds have red patches.

"Borunka had several children, and thus the Guajiro went on multiplying. When they became numerous, Mareiwa returned and distributed among them seeds of watermelon, corn, and melon, all of which the Guajiro eat to this day. Until this /170/ time the Guajiro had not sown seed, but had collected only the wild fruits of the forest. Mareiwa brought together all the troupials and woodcocks /zancalargas/. A flock of these he sent far away, very far away, and there they

[113 cont.]

the propitiation of the rain, which is the culmination of the rituals of the Guajiro Indians.

When summer continues overlong and endangers the crops, animals, and the community in general, the shaman gets ready to call for and to attract rain. To effect this he dresses in the way we have seen him do when he cures sickness or casts out epidemics and begins to invoke up his protector spirits that they may aid him in his trance. He chews tobacco and rhythmically sways his torso and head while shaking his maraca. All these acts he carries out while seated on a wooden zoomorphic chair. He then commences to sing loudly to attract his spirits, and when he attains this he asks them to send rain. He tells them that men need it, that they are without food and without water in their wells, and they are near death through hunger and thirst, their animals are dying, and misery and desolation is overrunning their country. At certain moments the shaman goes out from the house where he is carrying out his ceremony and walks around it so as to attract the rain and scare away the evil spirits that are keeping it back. As a result of these ceremonies rain should fall.

But this is not the only method that the natives have at their disposal to attract rain. The propitiation can be effected in a different way without the intervention of the shaman. This is happening now in all the acts of magic in this society, which we may describe as being in a state of disintegration in which the prestige of the shaman has lost importance, and ordinary people have taken over his science. We shall see below a series of methods the natives employ to attract rain without the shaman's intervention.

For example, a kind of adoration is very common which the Indians pay to a certain iguana that is found in the crevices of rocks, especially in the cliffs of the seacoast, an adoration that is shown in a series of fiestas and dances, the purpose of which is to obtain the favor of these reptiles, so that they may place no [114] obstacle in the way of the hoped-for rainfall but let it occur freely. We shall study this association iguana-rainfall more fully in the last chapter.

Other methods used by the Indians to attract rain during summer are: beating their drums for many hours on consecutive

[114 cont.]

789 821 nights and repeating this at sunrise; or shooting their arrows — or a more modern procedure, their shotguns — toward the clouds to make them discharge their moisture. In the first case, it seems as if the drums endeavor to reproduce the sound of thunder during the storms that are usually associated with rain. The native believes that by creating one of the concomitant factors he will bring about the whole desired condition, that is, the production of the whole phenomenon; for him, thunder and rain are two equal and inseparable things, so by obtaining one he will automatically attain the other.

• • •

241 462 Men and women participate equally in sowing crops with a division of labor which corresponds to the combined magico-biological whole. The men have charge of preparing the soil and making the holes for the seed; the women do the planting and the covering up of the seed. They say that if the grain is planted by the woman, it will have a better chance of growing and developing, and the harvest will be more abundant. The woman is considered as a symbol of fecundity through accomplishing the gestation of the child, and that force she transmits to the seed at the moment she plants it.

• • •

789 821 During eclipses of the sun or moon the natives cry disconsolately because they fear that these heavenly bodies will not continue fulfilling their functions; in crying they implore them not to abandon them nor leave the world plunged in darkness. To oblige them to return to normal, the Indians shoot their rifles at them, and in the more remote areas of La Guajira they organize a great noisy shouting, crying and shooting their arrows at the sky, so that the new day will triumph.

• • •

When there is a great deal of lightning during the stormy season, the old Guajiro who still retain a great fear of this natural

[114 cont.]
789 phenomenon — organize, as in the case of the eclipses, noisy
821 groups who shout aloud, [115] begging the lightning to withdraw,
● to go to the sea and make the storms that frequently lash the coasts of Cabo de la Vela and Chichibacoa.

• • •

When the Guajiro is on the sea and, as frequently happens, his vessel becomes becalmed, he calls on the breeze to return by means of a long-drawn-out whistle, trying every pitch until he gets it to return.

• • •

821 Finally, if at dusk a considerably large, vividly red cloud
787 appears, the native believes that it announces that there will shortly be a war between two clan organizations.

787 Magic and dreams. The Guajiro Indian looks upon his
813 dreams as revelations of the future. His mentality does not conceive them as products of the past or as being associated with certain psycho-physiological phenomena, but as previews of his life, as a way of seeing future happenings, as revelations made by the spirits of strange things that will happen to the person dreaming or to those that appear in the dream. These dreams are not, therefore, private personal phenomena but social events, as what they contain affects the entire community or parts of it and determines many of their individual or collective acts, since the Guajiro is always strongly linked to this phenomenon as he is to all other magic; and in this respect he is a determinist. His life, his social and economic activities, his relations with his geographic surroundings, his illnesses, birth and death are
813 determined by this play of magic interactions. It does not matter that the phenomena are not always repeated in the same way or that on many occasions the events expected to occur as the consequence of a certain concatenation of magic causes do not take place or do so in a different or even contrary manner to that expected; the native does not waver in his belief in that invisible but active force. He continues to be attached to it, as

[127 cont.]
714 representation of the re-creation of the universe, the resurgence of nature that changes and disappears, to reappear later.

796 In large part, this could explain the whole of the fiesta.
821 In reality what in La Guajira is being celebrated under the name of the Dance of the Kid is nothing but a true re-creation of the world of the natives of those barren plains. With the arrival of the rains the sea of sand is converted into a green world, the dry beds of the streams become powerful streams of water, the dry brushwood is transformed into green forest, anxiety over thirst disappears, fatigue from sun and desert is changed to rest, hunger to abundance, and worry to hope in the ripening of fruits and the disappearance of the specter of poverty which prowls the sierras and the plains. It is Mareiwa, their divinity, their good spirit, who has made his apparition over the lakes of the Sierra de Nevada, unleashing storms and hurricanes and bringing the promised rains to his creatures.

786 But, on the other hand, the sexual acts we have just shown
796 to be present at this traditional fiesta of La Guajira should be treated apart as they represent a transgression of the established rigid and severe cultural patterns that refer to carnal relations between men and women. As the general interpretation of the whole of the Guajiro community has not yet been finished, which could give us sufficient data to carry out necesary clarifications, we shall have to limit ourselves to noting certain outstanding facts.

836 Unmarried men and women in La Guajira, when looked at in its normal state, are subject to rigorous restrictions in their sex life. Sexual intercourse before marriage is not allowed to
[689] their women as the men want their spouses to be virgin. The bachelor is limited in the satisfaction of his sexual impulses by the law of compensation payment, which forces him in the case of his having relations with an unmarried girl to pay a heavy indemnity by which is covered the harm done to the woman, the offense [128] to her relatives, and the possible pains and dangers of childbirth when pregnancy occurs. And if these impositions
[621] are not complied with or if the Indian does not marry the girl, paying the price her relatives demand, revenge and declaration

[130 cont.]

536 796 Lowie's words, which we have just quoted, serve us well for what we have wished to call theatrical representations in La Guajira, as these also are but simple farces in which they seek to represent some act in the life of the community, in their mythology, or from scenes from the natural life surrounding them, in the midst of the ceremonies that are organized to celebrate the arrival of the rains, the propitiation of these, and the ripening of the fruits [of the soil]. Naturally, as we stated at the beginning, this ceremony is an inseparable whole up to a certain point, a totality in which the most trivial diversions, such as these unimportant representations and some games, are mixed with outstandingly important actions such as the transgression of social patterns in the satisfaction of sexual impulses, which we have just described and analyzed and in which the organization norms are utterly discarded, tradition is broken, and they give free rein to wantonness and [131] pleasure. It is above all a rite. But as Lowie himself affirms: "It is frequent that these important rituals present dramatic elements, because of which it was sometimes believed that a ceremony was nothing more than a dramatized myth. Now we know that when myth and ritual are found associated, most frequently the former has been added later, whether or not it be more ancient.... In short, the ceremonial of primitives at times is something more than pomp, and it can raise itself to the height of a true theatrical representation." (66)

66. Lowie. Op. cit., XVII, 310.

796 841 It is curious, nevertheless, that in the celebration of this fiesta dedicated to the propitiation of the rains, nothing related to the myths about them is to be found. Representations of fecundity abound in many of its aspects, as we have just seen in the description of the sexual aspect. But there is no representation related to the rains, at any rate none known to us, unless it be one where the devil and a cloud intervene, or the devil and smoke, as the word to designate the two concepts -- cloud and smoke -- is the same in Guajiro, sirima. In this dramatization, which we shall describe later, the cloud triumphs over the devil. It could be interpreted as the triumph of the rains over the long

[131 cont.]
summer and over sicknesses, pestilences, and deaths which occur as a consequence of it. But we have no work to sustain this affirmation. Also one must take into account the fact that the natives are not willing that strangers be present at their Fiesta of the Kid; and when they are, the play is much repressed in its natural expression and becomes a pale copy, artificial, almost we might say a special product for exportation. Missionaries have contributed greatly to this since they are opposed to the fiesta, considering it amoral or immoral because of the sexual freedom which is shown during its performance and the representation of natural scenes of the procreative life of animals. All the data that we have are not the product of our own personal observation of the fiesta but are reports collected from different sources in diverse parts of La Guajira. They have, at the very least, the value of data verified several times over.

All this leads us to think that even though the Dance of the Kid is directly related to the rains since it always starts when the rains begin even though it is specially dedicated to Mareiwa, the divinity of the rains, as we shall prove in the coming chapter, even though its name [132] appears to be derived from the stellar constellation of the Seven Kids, iwa, whose association with rain we shall also note in the following chapter, it is primarily a ceremony dedicated to fecundity, fecundity of the soil shown by the sprouting of plant life brought about by the rains. Fecundity and rain are seen, then, as two inseparable factors, two terms in the same equation: life.

We spoke of the aspect of demonstration of ability in theatrical representations when we delimited the areas of study of the ceremonial of the Kid. In effect, according to narrations we have at our disposal about the representative games, which we shall describe in detail in the latter part of this chapter, at the end of each one, out of the two sides which have taken part in the development, one side is seen to triumph over the other due to its greater skill or ability in movement or to the physical strength of those taking part when it is a matter of representations of struggles, as we saw in the game of the hawksbill turtle, and as we shall see in the representation of scenes introducing animals,

[142 cont.]
776 although he sees everything.... Mareigua combines three main spirits and many subaltern ones inferior to Him. [143] Some of these spirits are masculine, some feminine.... An Indian sees
• [821 that his crop is drying up for lack of water, and far from imploring
789] Heaven for rain, he beats his drum every night and at dawn as if he expected the sound to break up the clouds, or he fires his gun with a similar hope.... Should one of his relatives become ill, he calls in the shaman so that he can with his remedies, his maraca, his tobacco or manilla spittle, and the instructions of his spirits, cure the sick man; instead of appealing to God and asking him to bring his relative back to health." (72)

72. Ibid., II, 65-67.

Jorge Isaacs, the famous Colombian novelist, in the second half of the past century, made an excursion under government authority to study La Guajira and other regions of the country, and he wrote in the report he presented: "Mareigua is the name by which the Guajiro designate God, or better said, the unbegotten one, immaterial force, master of creation." (73)

73. Isaacs. Estudio del Lenguaje Guajiro [Study of the Guajiro Language], 303.

Finally, the ethnologist Professor Hernández de Alba, as a result of his expedition to the peninsula says: "Mareigua. All that is good for the Guajiro: rain, abundance, life, protection, the world in which he lives, all come from Mareigua, the one and only God, always good, never evil...." (74)

74. Hernández de Alba. Etnología Guajira [Guajiro Ethnology], 49-50.

(77 The quotations which we have cited lead us to the belief by
776 the Guajiro in an all-powerful god, unique and universal. This

[145 cont.]

2. According to data collected in the field among the people, the son of God (Mareiwa) exists. He was born from the union of the waves and the clouds in a place called Pulówi, in certain "sacred" lakes where human beings may not go, situated in the Sierra Nevada, where there are a number of both fresh- and salt-water lakes surrounded by medicinal plants. Mareiwa on occasion descends to these places, and it is at these times that heavy rainfall occurs in La Guajira, that is, during the seasons which in the peninsula are called autumn, spring, and winter. Then all the vegetation sprouts, and all the trees, pasture, and plants are green.

3. Another legend states that Mareiwa was born of a woman who became pregnant when, being in her monthly period, she was greatly frightened by the spectacle of a tremendous storm. Without having sexual relations with any mortal, she afterward gave birth in the same way as other women.

4. Guajiro legends relating to Mareiwa also assert that he was born under an olive tree (77) in some place in La Guajira.

77. The olive tree we refer to in these paragraphs is not the same as that of temperate zones but is an autochthonous tree, whose similarity to the former justifies its name.

The importance of this legend stems from the peculiar character of the tree, which is the only one belonging to the Guajiro flora that escapes the effects of long summers and is always fresh and green, keeping its leaves and bearing fruit throughout the year.

5. In his propitiation of the rains when summer lasts too long, the shaman invokes his protector spirits, spirits of good, and especially Fumayule, the name by which curers [curanderos] know Mareiwa.

6. In the work and paragraphs already quoted from the work of Professor Hernández de Alba, we find a new relation between Mareiwa and rain; he says: "Mareigua. Everything that is good for the Guajiro: rain, abundance... and He saved

[146] the people during the deluge on the high hill of Pororo, which he made to grow higher as the waters rose." (78)

78. Hernández de Alba. Op. cit., 49-50.

7. When we spoke of natural phenomena in magic, we stated that a kind of veneration was very commonly paid by the natives to an iguana that lives in the crevices of rocks, especially in the cliffs of the coast; veneration that is manifested outwardly by fiestas and dances and is intended to influence the iguana not to put obstacles in the way of the rains, which are under his dominion. Up to this point the fact appears to have no connection with the subject which we are treating, but supported by linguistics, we shall clarify our point of view:

The Guajiro word for iguana is iwána, and it can be split up thus: iwa, "rain" (this is what the Indians call the rain that falls in summer, April); na, particle which seems to denote an abundance of something, as may be seen in these other examples: ipa-na-rú, a La Guajiro place name which means "among many rocks" and corresponds in context to: a conical depression that holds rain water situated among many rocks; garrapatamana, another place name descriptive of its meaning, "a place where there are many animal ticks [garrabatas]. According to the above, iwána means an "abundance of rain."

Now, the word by which the constellation of the Seven Kids is called when in a certain position it coincides with the summer rains, is iwa, the same as "rain." Furthermore, from the name "Mareiwa" we can separate the constant particle, iwa, "rain." Unfortunately, we could discover nothing that might correspond to the first particle, máre, in the vocabulary we collected, nor in others that have been published and which we had the opportunity to consult. But, on reviewing a dictionary of the Arawak language of the Guianas, with which the Guajiro dialect is closely linked, we find that mali is the name of a "certain star"; malidakte is "beginning of drought." "The name is derived from the star mali." (79)

79. Anonymous. Op. cit., 71.

[146 cont.]

If we accept the idea that the Guajiro are descended from the Arawak of the Guianas, with whom they are intimately connected both by their language and culture, there is nothing strange to be found in the formation of the name Mareiwa from mali, male (the l and the r do not exist in the Guajiro language), and fwa, words that are used to name stars and in consequence must be related to the general Arawak cosmogony. In any case, the linguistic association of star-rain-god-divinity confirms the statement which we have made that Mareiwa [147] is none other than the propitiatory spirit of the rains, and by the same token, that of good harvests, of abundance, and of well-being.

The harsh geographical conditions of La Guajira and the technical incapacity of the native to dominate and put them in his service without incurring the great inconveniences which are above all occasioned by the climate, have caused this being (Mareiwa) to be raised to first position in the category of protector spirits of the community. Also, the changes brought about in their economy during past centuries have contributed to this advance in status, because since the introduction of stock grazing, winter has become more and more indispensable for the maintenance of pasture, without which the stock would suffer serious losses. We have no data relating to the myths or religion of these Indians at the time of the Conquest but what we have unearthed and the fact that there is a veritable confusion with respect to the origin and functions of Mareiwa point to the fact that, in a certain way, the Guajiro are living in a state of transition with regard to their divinities, we might almost say a moment of true creation of their gods which has not yet been definitively achieved, and for which contact with western civilization has created difficulties which by now are practically insurmountable.

Wanurú. As we referred extensively to the wanurú when we were speaking of sickness and the shaman, we shall add only a few details here and systematize the knowledge we have acquired about this matter up to now.

1. The wanurú can harm the Guajiro bodily and spiritually, bodily by means of such sicknesses as attack men, animals,

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

CHAPTER 4

Towards a Mirage

Our donkey caravan tripped along between the sand dunes at a gentle trot. The sun poured what the Indians call its molten gold over us in fierce waves. The donkeys were slow, but our riding-mules were fresh and even tried a trick or two, throwing our photographer, who was no expert, into a cactus bush. That was a pity, for the spikes were as long as knitting needles and unpleasantly hard and sharp. The Indians laughed heartlessly. It was perhaps the only amusing thing that happened to them on the whole trip.

We had no idea what our men were called. As I have already mentioned, the Indians' first names are secret. They always say: 'I have no name' or 'Call me what you like'. Your name is part of your personality. You cannot surrender it to strangers. If you know another's name, you can acquire a certain hold over him, just as you can harm him, if you had some of his hairs or nail-clippings with which to work magic. The family name, that of the clan, is naturally public. White people usually give Spanish names to the Indians with whom they have to deal, and there are plenty of Juans and Josés in the peninsula now. Usually, however, you give a nickname to the Indians you have temporarily in your service, just as they give their employers nicknames. We discovered that they had christened our photographer 'The Red One'. He was not red-headed at all, but very fair, and because of that, his face was always highly coloured in the heat. I could not get out of them what they called my wife and me. I suppose they thought that we would be offended or regard it as insubordination. They had been

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

the demon of illness and death, Wanuru, is called Jirarai 756
Wanuru is the name of all the spirits of the dead which are 776
many, thus we are obviously dealing here with groups of spirits; and where Wanuru acts as guardian or assistant spirits, they no doubt represent the souls of dead medicine men.

One piache, known as a clever rain-maker, told us that 756
when he needed advice over rain-making, he used to go to 776
the burial place to talk with his dead brother's spirit, the brother having been cleverer at it than he. When a piache 789
has to make rain, he seats himself on his stool as for other functions, chews tobacco, shakes his maraca and rhythmically moves his torso and head. He then begins to sing in a high voice, calling upon the spirits and demanding that they bring rain, for people need it, if they are not to die of hunger. Now and again he emerges and dances round the huts, driving away the spirits that are preventing the rain from coming.

The Indians often first try to make rain without the 789
piache's help, by drumming at night or by firing guns and 821
arrows at the clouds. The drumming imitates thunder and can thus, according to the laws of magic, cause storms. The shooting drives away the spirits that are preventing the cloud from dispensing its rain. This is also what they do at eclipses of the sun, when all burst into tears and shoot at the sky to drive away the evil spirit that is preventing the sun from shining. A piache's own spirit does not interfere in his magic-making, for which he uses none but auxiliary [775]
spirits. It is not till after his death that a piache's spirit can become active and help some other piache.

The piache has to submit to certain restrictions on diet 756
and love-life. He or she must never have extra-marital 834
intercourse and even marital intercourse must be restricted. A female piache must never spend the night with her husband, but merely pay him fleeting visits that should be as short as possible; she must never allow herself to be caressed by him, and must lie quite still and indifferent during [833]
coition. If this is not done, her guardian spirit will be jealous 756
and angry, and may cause trouble. And, preferably, she 842

/537 cont./

776 114 sea from the land and the planting of trees and animals to benefit man" /translated from the Spanish/. The original figure of Mareiwa is probably that of a culture-hero. Chaves (1953, p. 183) makes the same assumption, but adds that this personality is "at the present time like God for many mestizos" /translated from the Spanish/. Jahn (p. 183) declares "that the Spanish have identified /Maleiwa/ with the true God or Supreme Being" /translated from the Spanish/. In Torrano (p. 188) one reads "Maréigua = God, Supreme Being" /translated from the Spanish/. Unfortunately even today it is still true that the "Goajiro religion is imperfectly known" /cited in English/ (Armstrong-Métraux, p. 382).

614 812 773 He was found as an infant, who grew rapidly like any Indian child. He ate tuuma (12) and dressed like the Guajiro.

[262]

12. It was identified for me as tuna, which is the fruit of the Opuntia (Indian fig) and very well-known in South America. Cf. Vegamian, p. 214.

The mother was an old woman; her hut stood in the north. The father, a certain Saramai, was also said to be a god. [824 822] Because Mareiwa was born under an oil tree, this tree does

/537 cont./

614 not lose its green leaves, even in the dry season. The Indians
212 seek shelter under its branches during storms, because lightning
773 will not strike there.
[824
[821

/538/ Mareiwa created an Indian woman named Borunka; she became the mother of all the Guajiro people (13).

[114]

13. Chaves (1953, p. 181) reports another myth of the "Origen de los Guajiros," in which, however, the totem clans are not mentioned; therefore, no contradiction of the myth presented here can be brought forward from there.

He also gave her a companion, by whom she became pregnant. When the time of her delivery came, however, she felt incapable of giving birth. The pains lasted for three days without delivery. Her vagina was set with teeth. Mareiwa removed them. At the same time he took two ribs, the lowest one from each side, from her mate. He inserted them in Borunka so that she could later give birth without hindrance, though not without pain.

614 Since loss of blood was connected with delivery since
212 then, Mareiwa summoned all the birds. He commanded the
773 sangre de toro, or pincwait, to wash itself where the birth
825 took place. He gave the same order to the troupials (weaver
844 birds of the family Icteridae), as well as to the icó [ishu, Phoenicotraupis rubra] with the black wings, whose breast feathers and head-tuft are red in color, and finally to the macaws. The woodpecker [Ceophloeus lineatus] arrived late for this bath. Mareiwa said to him, "You came late, to be sure, but I shall paint your tuft anyway," and he painted it red. Thus, the birds mentioned have red spots in their plumage.

614 Borunka bore several children, and the Guajiro pro-
212 ceeded to multiply. When there were many of them, Mareiwa
773